

I would like to comment on billing code 4160-01-S, to the Food and Drug Administration, 21 CFR Part 101, (Docket Number 2004N-0463), RIN 0910-AF22. This proposal is in regards to making the caloric content of foods more prominent on food labels.

With our nation continually growing larger and increasingly becoming more obese I feel proper labeling is essential. Our nation is becoming more health cautious but at a slow pace. I feel that better labeling could help increase customer awareness. A lot of people look at the labels but often get confused and aren't sure of what they are looking at. If consumers had clearer labels they could make healthier decisions.

I think options such as increasing the font size and possibly making it bold could be a useful option. Highlighting would also make it more noticeable and increase the odds of people making better decisions. Many people read the calories but don't take into consideration the total daily percentage so I feel that including that information would also be useful. If a consumer is about to eat a food that has 300 calories they may not think much of it, however, if there is a daily percentage value listed they may reconsider when they notice that food is taking a large portion of their daily allowance.

I also feel that calories from fat should be included on the labels but in a smaller print that is not bolded. A lot of people try to balance their calories and fat so I do feel that information is needed. There needs to be a distinct difference between the calories and calories from fat though. It may be confusing if they see both printed in the same manner and may mistake the calories from fat as the actual calories so they need to be differentiated somehow.

Another thing I feel would be of great help would be to include a greater emphasis on the serving size and amount of servings per package. I think that's often overlooked. Perhaps increasing the font size on that information would make it more noticeable. It's very easy to eat more than a serving size especially when it's packaged in a smaller package that contains 2-3 servings in the package.

It's very important to make the consumer more aware of what they are eating. I think it would be great if they would list the caloric value per serving on the front of every package. I think if that information is listed on the front the consumer has better chances of seeing it and making healthier choices. It may be more costly to the producer but it will be worth it. Any attempt at lowering our increasingly obese population is worth it.

I believe that if that information is listed on the front of packages there will be greater competition among companies to provide the general public with healthier choices. If there are people out there who can't always make the best decisions this may actually force them into eating healthier because the companies would try to offer the healthiest choices. Companies would probably also repackage foods to offer 100 calorie packages of crackers, (for example) to help the consumer along. Repackaging of foods will increase awareness of how big an actual serving size may be. Serving sizes are probably the most overlooked. For those people that actually read the labels and notice the calories, they probably are not considering that the calories listed are for a single serving and not the entire package.

I believe our nation is in a crisis and any attempt to lower the growing obese rates is worth a try. Better emphasis on nutritional values, especially when listed clearly on the front of a package, could increase awareness and lower obesity.

I think what this agency has proposed in this docket should be brought into regulation. Our country desperately needs this. I hope that in the near future I can walk into a grocery store and as walking down the aisles I can clearly see the calorie contents on the front of every package. Make America more aware and healthier.

-Mrs. Brown